

**Interview with the Oakton Women's Club:  
Charlotte Wineland, Jane Wood, and Lynda Byrne  
conducted by Linda Byrne for the Providence District History Project  
Providence Perspective**

**September 17, 2007**

**Linda Byrne:** Good afternoon, my name is Linda Byrne and I am the current President of the Oakton Women's Club in Oakton, Virginia and I am here this afternoon on September 17, 2007 with Charlotte Wineland former President of the Oakton Women's Club and currently our Treasurer and Jane Wood who is currently our Historian and who has also served as President of the club. Good afternoon Ladies, we are going to start with Charlotte telling us a little history about the club.

**Charlotte Wineland:** The history of the Women's Oakton Club - in the fall of 1976 the women of the Oakton and Vale areas came together and decided there was a need for a women's club. President Jean Pike received the Charter at the 1977 Northern District's spring meeting in Manassas. The Oakton Women's Club became a member of the Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs and the General Federation of Women's Clubs the largest women's organization in the world. Clubs programs and projects adhere to the objectives of the club, which is to bring the members into closer unity in order to promote through their common interests the civic cultural and social welfare of their community. This includes speakers, discussions, demonstrations, entertainment, trips and even parties.

Almost immediately after organizing the club, the club became besieged with requests for donations. So a policy on giving was adopted - Which is that contributions from the club will be given within the local community and to Federation projects. Raising money to help within the community has provided many rewards and much good fellowship to members. Some of the fund raising projects were serving lunch at auctions, bridge parties, dinner coupon books, a booth at the Vale Club Fair, box lunch auctions and fashion shows. It is interesting to note that there have never been more than 48 members within the club at one time. One of the benefactors of the club's earnings was a young man who earned his Eagle Scout Rank with

funding from the club for his project, which was landscaping the grounds of the Vale Club House.

Officers are installed by a Federation Officer at the April or May meetings. The December meeting is traditionally a luncheon or brunch and features the exchange of Christmas Ornaments.

The last few years have been to support the Oakton Library. One way was to facilitate the acquisition of three acres of ground in Oakton for the Library to be built. The Oakton Women's Club has lived up to the hopes and aspirations of its charter members. We are proud of our record and feel that the club will continue to grow and become an ever greater part of the community in the future.

During the past four years the Oakton Women's Club has held a fashion show each spring and donated the profits to local charities, such as the Oakton Library, the Sheppard Center, Fairfax for Horses, Aid to Young Mothers, Volunteer Fairfax, Madison High School Band, Alternative House and to the Michael Dowd Memorial.

**Linda:** Thank you Charlotte, I think one of the interesting projects that we had back 5 or 6 years ago was Camp Easter Seal East had a pony that died that had pulled a cart for the handicapped children. There was an expressed need to replace the pony and Jerry Sheppard suggested that possibly we could buy a pony and donate it. Myself having a horse and riding background went to an auction and purchased a pony which was perfect except he did not pull a cart so we trained him to do this task and then took him to Camp Easter Seal East where he pulled the cart for the handicapped children. I believe that was one of the most fun activities that we have ever had.

**Linda:** Now I would like to introduce you to Mrs. Jane Wood who is going to tell you a little more about our library project and some of the benefits and activities that went with that.

**Jane Wood:** Good afternoon ladies - the Oakton Women's Club held a reception on December 17, 2000 at the International Headquarters of the

General Federation of Women's Club in Washington, DC and the Oakton Women's Club received an award from the General Federation for their work facilitating the donation of 3 acres for a Library in Oakton, Virginia. The Library is a part of the Fairfax County Library.

The reception honored Mr. Allen Gellar and the Hearthstone Vanguard Group (owners of the land) for working with local government, the local community to donate the land for the Oakton Library. This has been a highlight of the Oakton Women's Club work for a number of years - to ensure the county identifies their community as one that would receive a new library and for working with the developer to locate vacant land on which to place the Library.

Also at the reception was Mr. Gerald Connolly, Supervisor for the Providence District of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County Public Library Director Mr. Edwin S. Clay III, who was instrumental in making this donation possible. What started as a community improvement project to provide a focal point for the village of Oakton turned into the donation of a new site for a the new public library. The value of the donated land is 2.1 million dollars. The project began as an effort to impose intense commercial development in the center of Oakton and evolved into a one through which a new library would become a focal point for the community related activity an inspiration for renewed public enthusiasm for protecting public community values.

As involvement in the program progressed obtaining the library became the catalyst around which community interest and support as well as government action coalesced. Currently there is no central focus for the Oakton Community and the building of the library will provide a needed service and a place to gather inside and out. This project not only provides open space but provides land for a library and makes Oakton a workable community. This library also connects to a county park that already exists as a landmark and will be with walking distance of two schools, two day care centers, two retirement homes, two churches, and several hundred residences. Not only will the library provide books and reading space but community rooms, Internet access but will also provide a focal point for retirees, school children and families.

**Linda:** Thank you Jane. Now I wanted to ask you Jane, how long have you lived in the Oakton community?

**Jane:** Off and on for about 70 years.

**Linda:** So you grew up in Oakton.

**Jane:** Yes.

**Linda:** Through what years would that be?

**Jane:** From 1933 on.

**Linda:** So you have seen changes in Oakton.

**Jane:** Tremendous changes. In 1933 this was a poverty stricken area. This was mostly farm area. Property values were next to nothing. My parents were city bred yet bought a farm in Oakton and we eventually lived here. It started as a summer home yet we liked it so much we made it a permanent residence. I was away for number of years, I lived in PA and I decided to return where my roots are and I am here to stay.

**Linda:** I believe the Oakton Women's Club deserves a lot of credit for the donation of land for the library. Two other facts I want to mention, one: This is the first time in Fairfax County history that a developer donated land to a public library. It also was wonderful that we had this donation of 2.1 million dollars because it could help the General Federation in meeting its goal of 12 million dollars under the Points of Light to raise money for libraries, buildings, the books, etc. We were very fortunate in having Shelby Handler who was the President of the General Federation, in the time of our celebration, who gave us significant recognition for our many years of hard work. This project began in 1997 and we are now approaching September 29, 2007, when the library will have its grand opening.

**Linda:** I want to thank you ladies for being here today and do either of you have anything to add and information about the Oakton Women's Club that you would like to share?

**Jane:** One thing 70 years ago we did not have any paved roads in this area there were only dirt roads. I think that Hunter's Mill Road and Rt. 123 were black tops but all others were dirt and none of the roads had names. When you had to go somewhere you would take turns at the names of individual farm owners, i.e., the Jones farm, turn left.

**Linda:** I thank you. I will add the names to this tape of the founding members and I want to thank you ladies for being with me this afternoon for recording this wonderful information.

**Linda:** One thing I want to mention is that we, the currently have 18 members of our group. We may be small but are very powerful and part of our power comes from the Federation and being a part of so many women's clubs throughout the country.